



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GUILTY PLEAS ENTERED IN WACO FEDERAL CARJACKING/KIDNAPPING CASE

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that 32-year-old Robert Gallegos-Cruz and 28-year-old Jesus Estrada, both of whom are Mexican nationals, face lengthy federal prison terms after pleading guilty yesterday afternoon to their roles in a carjacking/kidnapping incident on October 25, 2007.

Appearing before United States District Judge Walter S. Smith, Jr, Estrada pleaded guilty to one count each of carjacking and possession of a firearm during a crime of violence; Gallegos-Cruz, to one count of kidnapping. As a result, Estrada faces between 30 and 55 years in federal prison; Gallegos-Cruz, up to life in federal prison. No sentencing date has been scheduled.

According to court records, the victim was lured into a residence in Duncanville, Texas, where the defendants assaulted him with a baseball bat. At the time, Estrada was in possession of a M-11, .380 caliber machine gun, stamped with the logo "Cobray" and equipped with a "silencer." Estrada and Gallegos-Cruz subsequently, tied the victim up, took his car keys, rolled him up in a blanket, loaded the victim inside his own vehicle, then proceeded to drive to a storage facility in Waco. During the course of the carjacking, several calls were made to the victim's wife demanding \$1 million or they would kill her husband.

That evening, McLennan County Sheriff's deputies arrested Estrada and Gallegos-Cruz following a routine traffic stop. Further investigation revealed the location of the property where the victim was being held captive. Authorities subsequently arrested a third defendant in this case, 27-year-old Rafael Padilla, a Mexican national. The victim was taken to a hospital as he was experiencing kidney failure and near death. Padilla remains in custody pending trial on federal carjacking and kidnapping charges scheduled for June 9, 2008.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, McLennan County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Greg Gloff is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

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